Combining Social Movement and Ethnic Minority Survey Research in the Digital Age: Unpacking the Problems and Responding Creatively

Abstract: Social movement research raises many complicated methodological issues for scholars. This study systematically explains the methodological quandaries, decisions, and outcomes researchers confronted in a study of one such social movement, the Gezi Park protests. In the summer of 2013 and the months that followed, anti-government protestors in Turkey were supported by ethnic Turkish minorities living in Europe. These protestors took to the streets, created websites and Facebook pages as well as initiated offline organizations to express that support. In this study of those European Turks who lived in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, we explain how participants were recruited and surveyed in this complex and extremely sensitive environment that divided the participants from the resistors in the Gezi movement. The analysis also illustrates how the lessons learned from this study can be applied to other social movement research, and to other survey research on sensitive issues and with a targeted population.

Key Words: Gezi, methodology, survey, recruitment, social movement research, online and offline data collection

Most experienced survey researchers are aware of the pitfalls in their work. Problems related to sampling, recruitment, response rate, and phrasing of questions are the most common. More recently, issues related to internet-based questionnaires and over-researching of populations have been added to the list.

What has been less addressed in the problems that confront researchers who choose a survey methodology, are the special issues surrounding social movements, and particularly within such movements where polarization of positions is the norm. Social movements have become a major focus of scholarship around the world. The recent publication of a three-volume encyclopedia on the topic is an indicator of that focus. As editors David A. Snow et al. point out:

> It is arguable that social movements, as one of the principle forms through which collectivities give voice to their shared grievances and claims by engaging in various kinds of collective action or behavior, such as protesting in the streets, have escalated with the spread of democracy and the corresponding growth of civil society (2013, p. xlii).

The editors also argue that such movements "tend to cluster across time in 'waves' or 'cycles', and that events like the Arab Spring or the Occupy protests may indicate the presence of such a cycle" (2013, p. xlii). Despite the repression by governments in most of the democracy movements, and the gains of many of these movements being reversed, such as those in Egypt, Libya and Syria, "nevertheless they have left their trace in the sands of popular consciousness and given participants and supporters a sense of shared collective efficacy" (Burawoy 2015, p. 15).

Our study was of the European-based part of a social movement that began in Istanbul, Turkey in late May 2013 (referred to as Gezi Park), a movement that developed in a similar spirit to the Occupy protests. The demonstrations began in a small park in central Istanbul, one of the few remaining green spaces in the city of 14 million where the government had made plans to construct a new shopping center. The police were ordered to attack the protestors encamped in the park at dawn on May 30 using tear gas canisters and water canons. The attack marked the beginning of widespread demonstrations across the major cities in the country. The list of grievances with the authoritarian policies of then Prime Minister Erdoğan's government grew along with the size and scope of the demonstrations. A group of about 800 Turkish and Kurdish[i] minorities in Amsterdam alongside many similar gatherings in Frankfurt, Berlin, Brussels, etc., held demonstrations in solidarity with their compatriots in Turkey.

Our study focused on the minority population in the diaspora living in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany who supported or opposed the acts of civil disobedience in Turkey. Offline and online questionnaires addressing Turkish attitudes and behaviors related to Gezi were collected from November 2013 through May 2014.

We encountered a variety of problems related to the participation of respondents in sufficient numbers. What we learned from this experience should be useful to others whose study involves ethnic minorities engaged in activities related to a social movement or who are opposed to such engagement. More generally, it may also apply to surveys of any targeted population about sensitive issues. This article also describes the collection of data in online and offline forms of the same survey and the specific difficulties that entailed.

Contributions to the Literature on Survey Methods used in Protests

Traditional survey research of individuals participating in protests has created a set of unusual methodological questions. Protests are often short term, requiring a cross-sectional approach (one that collects data at a single point in time). Although cross-sectional data collection is criticized on several counts, Barrington (2012) found that such data may be useful. In comparing survey data from before and after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and before and after the Rose Revolution in Georgia, he learned that the "underlying relationships among variables measured by survey data can remain quite stable" (p. 312).

A bigger challenge for gathering data is the chaotic nature of a demonstration with its ever-moving crowds and the difficulty of separating bystanders from actual participants. Van Laer (2010) describes in detail the sampling plan for recruiting

participants in several demonstrations conducted in Belgium, with some interviewers placed in the front and others in the back of the crowd.

Other researchers have surveyed activists following the actual protests, selecting different formats for data collection. Some have compared paper and pencil (offline) questionnaires to computer-based formats (Booth-Kewley, Larson & Miyoshi 2007). These authors found no difference in the disclosure of information concerning "impression management" (or the deliberate attempt to answer in socially desirable ways) between the two formats, but respondents who completed the survey on the computer provided more answers that indicated the use of "self-deceptive enhancement" (or making more "honestly believed but positive" statements about their behavior). Higher levels of disclosure of risky behavior occurred in the answers to questions in the computer-based format.

The questions in surveys of protesters usually require that respondents reveal sensitive or personal information that could lead to various kinds of difficulties for them, particularly with law enforcement. Based on other studies that found that individuals are more likely to disclose socially undesirable behaviors when using automated methods for self-administration of a questionnaire, Lind and her colleagues investigated the reasons for this behavior. They found that greater disclosure occurred when the computer-assisted self-interviewing was used than when human interviewers asked the questions. They concluded that making contact with people's real or even virtual (computer generated) faces resulted in reluctance to provide sensitive information (Lind et al. 2013).

Questions addressing political or religious issues in surveys like ours frequently go unanswered. Kays, Gathercoal and Buhrow (2012) found that "topic sensitivity has a

large effect on missing data, and survey format has a moderate effect" (p. 251) in such circumstances. Although a higher percentage of college-age males did not complete the sensitive questions, their completion percentage was somewhat higher in the online format.

Frequently the reluctance to disclose information in online surveys is based on the concern that anonymity will not be protected. According to Sue and Ritter (2012), respondents may be concerned about identity protection because it is easy for researchers to attach identifiers to questionnaires or to link the surveys to their personal information. Despite measures to protect privacy, the difficulty in delivering on the promises has increased over time. In 2002 Walther critiqued the U.S. Code of Regulations Policies for the Protection of Human Subjects regarding these policies, questioning whether such high levels of restrictions were really necessary.

Surveys of participants in social movements may be requesting cooperation from those who have more heightened concerns about what may be done with the information they disclose. Also, Walther's arguments were published nearly 15 years ago when methods for accessing information illegally were less sophisticated and when online surveys were not in such common use.

Another problem that arises is the differential focus of protest-based research according to discipline of the researcher. Walgrave and Verhulst (2007) point out that political science and sociology approach the study of protests differently (political science focusing on the individuals in the protests or the micro level, and sociology focusing on the social movement organizations or the meso-level as well as the macro level where these organizations operate) (p. 1). The differential focus results in political

scientists using surveys that are mostly analyzed quantitatively and sociologists using event analysis, content analysis and in-depth interviews that are frequently qualitative in nature (p. 1). To address the gap between micro and macro-level research in the same study, Walgrave and Verhulst (2007) proposed to survey protestors while they were demonstrating and have them mail-in questionnaires distributed at the event. Next they called for conducting such surveys at a number of protests (p. 4). Van Aelst and Walgrave (2001) began this research using a population survey, protest-event analysis and interviews with protestors at the actual demonstrations. In order to conduct such comprehensive research, scholars must plan their study in advance of the actual demonstrations, which is not always possible.

No matter where the survey is conducted, protest-based respondents may be reluctant to complete a questionnaire given the risks involved. Those risks could include being identified by authorities or employers who may not be sympathetic to the protest perspective. Rüdig (2010) focused on the problem of non-response bias resulting from distributing mail-back surveys distributed during a demonstration. Comparing data from a face-to-face survey of demonstrators with a mail survey returned by other demonstrators at the same anti-Iraq war protest, he found that women and those who had "born a high 'cost' of traveling to the event were more likely to return the questionnaires, while those who had been frequent attendees at such demonstrations were less likely to respond."

The examination of these studies (See Table 1 for summary of literature findings) as a whole leads us to conclude that, although several researchers have grappled with thorny methodological issues, none of the choices they have made in terms of respondent

selection and response rate have been systematically studied over time. Nor have any of the researchers been able to achieve high percentages of responses given the sensitivity of the subject matter related to protest activity and the ephemeral nature of any given protest.

Our Social Movement Study

Our research was initially focused on the use of social media by the Turkish diaspora for building social capital. Two major hypotheses in our survey were related to the building of social capital in the diaspora during the Gezi protests in Europe—e.g. that less bridging to the majority population in Europe and more bonding to other members of the Turkish/Kurdish diaspora would take place during Gezi. In other words, we assumed that the Gezi protests would create opportunities for fostering links between like-minded people in the diaspora rather than the building of connections between heterogeneous groups.

Currently in most Western European countries, many members of the second and third generation of minorities, whose grandparents migrated from Turkey in the 1960s and the years following for political or economic reasons, have reached adulthood. Given the years they have spent in Europe (in our study an average of 18-24 years), these minorities might be expected to be more oriented to the countries where they live than those from which their parents or grandparents came. However, despite having grown up in Europe where they have been educated and socialized, many retain the strong ties of their families through life lived in Turkish neighborhoods in those European countries and the use of Turkish media received by satellites in their homes (d'Haenens & Ogan 2013; Peeters & d'Haenens 2005).

Given this close connection to Turkey, it was not surprising that when the large protests broke out in Istanbul and spread around the country in the summer of 2013, demonstrations supporting the goals of the protestors in Turkey were held in many European cities. We became interested in the nature of these sympathy protests and the possible influence they had on the social capital built by the diaspora participants and opponents to the movement. The first generation had many difficulties bridging social capital in learning the language, locating employment, and making social contact with members of the dominant culture. Their children had fewer problems because they attended local schools, learned the country's language from childhood, and made a range of contacts in their home countries. Many of the respondents to our survey were members of the second and third generation.

The survey findings were mixed in terms of feelings of connectedness to Europe and Turkey. For two of our measures of bridging social capital, more of the people in the anti-Gezi group (i.e. Erdoğan/Turkish government supporters) said they felt they belonged in the country where they lived and that they had an average of more than 15 friends who were from the majority population in that country. Those connections were unaffected by the events surrounding Gezi. However, those in the pro-Gezi group had stronger feelings of attachment to Turkey and greater interest in life and politics in Turkey once the Gezi protests began in Turkey. As a first step in this research we conducted a survey of Turkish minorities' attitudes and behaviors regarding the Gezi protests. One of our goals was to study the Turkish minorities' uses of social media to make connections with one another as well as to those staging protests back in Turkey.

We selected survey as our methodology for several reasons. First, when we began our study, the demonstrations had come to an end in Turkey, and even in the European cities there were fewer public protests, thus making interviewing or observing people in the streets infeasible. Second, we wished to determine the range and nature of support for the movement across the European countries, and surveying a large segment of the population was necessary to do that. Finally, we sought to follow the survey with a social network analysis and needed access and permission to follow respondents on their Twitter accounts.

Conducting a survey had several problems. Although some of the issues we confronted have been addressed in the literature, to our knowledge no one has written an overview of the process by which the issues were managed—successfully or unsuccessfully. Here we will try to provide the rationale for the methodological choices we made when faced with a less-than-ideal research environment with the hope that others can build on our experiences and apply them when adopting survey methodology in social movement studies.

Recruitment of Respondents

We wished to reach all Turkish and Kurdish ethnic minorities in the three countries who participated in, opposed, or were apathetic toward the protests in Turkey. The ideal sample for our study would have been a randomly selected group from both naturalized citizens and permanent residents then residing in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.

We consider this the ideal for several reasons. Those who chose to complete our survey were either enthusiastic supporters of Gezi or equally enthusiastic supporters of the Turkish government and the majority party that opposed Gezi. Those more neutral or

apathetic towards the social movement were difficult to contact. If those who demonstrated in European streets were simply a strong and vocal fringe group unlike the majority of the Turkish diaspora, the conclusions of our study have much less significance. Polarization of the population in Turkey has been on the rise in the years since governing party took power[ii] so securing a random sample would also indicate whether similar polarization was taking place in the diaspora.

Selecting a representative sample to measure political participation from our focus population would have been prohibitively expensive. In Germany there are nearly three million people of Turkish descent (making up 3.6% of the population, half of them belonging to the first generation) (Wolf 2014). In the Netherlands there are about 400,000 Turkish minorities as of the beginning of 2014, or 2.5% of the population (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek May 2014). And in Belgium, of the total population of about 11 million only 218,832 ethnic Turks (or about 2%) reside (Beste wensen 2012). Even these figures are estimates, however. There are no population lists for researchers to access, and although residents are required to register their addresses with municipal authorities, that information is not made available to academic researchers.

Therefore, we needed to devise more innovative ways of locating these minorities, then gain their attention and interest, and finally convince them that completing this survey would somehow be important to their lives as well as to the advancement of our research goals.

In such situations, workarounds often need to be created to recruit respondents. Facebook and Twitter advertising and posting of calls for participation are increasingly used as methods for attracting narrow populations, such as those within a specific age

group, or with particular health problems or who engage in certain behaviors like smoking or alcohol use (Rife et al. 2016; Rait, Prochaska, & Rubinstein 2015; Valdez et al. 2014). However, the respondents yielded by such methods may not be representative of the populations they are drawn from. Bhutta (2012) surveyed thousands of Catholics through Facebook recruiting, but found the sample to be "disproportionately female, young, educated and religiously active" compared to the overall population (p. 57). In another study using Facebook advertising to recruit young people for a health study, the sample population tended to be somewhat older and more educated than the target population, but the geographic distribution and socioeconomic profile were statistically similar (Fenner et al. 2012).

Researchers have tested the cost and success rate of Facebook recruitment compared with other methods. When Rait, Prochaska and Rubinstein (2015) recruited 13-17- year-olds through traditional methods such as talks in schools, advertising on buses, fliers and referrals, they had less success than when they recruited adolescents via Facebook. However, the Facebook ads also yielded a higher rate of ineligibles, while referrals were both the most successful and cost effective. Gilligan, Kypri and Bourke (2014) also recruited from traditional and social network sources for a study of parents of adolescents regarding alcohol use in Australia. They found that paid Facebook advertising was an effective and low-cost method for locating and recruiting a sufficient number of the hard-to-reach population for their study. The literature addressing social media use in recruitment mostly pertains to research of health-related topics.

(TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE)

Our study relied on a multi-method approach for recruiting respondents that included face-to-face, email, social media, and contacts made with small businesses and organizations serving the ethnic communities. We began by trying to assemble a list of organizations in the several countries that target Turkish minorities for their membership. These organizations form for various purposes; some religious, others political or economic, and many only for social purposes. Some of these organizations have enjoyed financial support from governments in the three countries, but recent austerity measures have caused this support to dwindle or disappear, leading to the dissolution of a number of them. So lists that we had secured that included contact information were often invalid.

A second strategy was to locate businesses or community groups in neighborhoods where minorities are known to reside. Once there, we blanketed small ethnic businesses with flyers containing information about the online survey urging them to complete the questionnaire. We also targeted events scheduled by these groups and tried to engage potential respondents following the events, offering either online or offline options for survey completion.

Thirdly, we contacted market research companies and government organizations that serve minority groups to ask whether they would share lists of minorities created in their work. This proved to be an unsuccessful strategy given the unwillingness of the companies to deliver their contact lists at an affordable price. If conditions changed, and if the cost for obtaining an identifiable sample were reasonable, that strategy might be used in the future for similar studies.

Our fourth strategy entailed the use of key words through which we searched social media (primarily Facebook) for Turkish/Kurdish diaspora organizations in the

several that created group pages. Then we asked the administrators for permission to join online groups in Facebook that organized themselves around Turkish subjects of interests in the countries of focus. Once we gained membership to those online groups we posted information about the survey. That worked well in many cases as we were able to initially join 486 Facebook groups, but some groups rejected our request to join and other groups, likely annoyed that we might be exploiting membership in the group, retracted their permission once we posted requests for participation in the study several times. Still others, upset by the intrusion into what was perceived to be a space reserved only for their group issues, threatened (or actually reported us) to Facebook management for removal. Others spammed or deleted our posts. In all, we received 27 email messages explaining why they did not accept recruitment for surveys on their group Facebook pages.

Although the rebuffs were troubling, we have faced rejection and even hostility based on a perception of privacy invasion in past research when we sent email invitations to potential participants. This is the cost of doing survey research in the digital age. Incivility in online spaces has been studied in the past (Rowe 2015; Papacharissi 2004), but our experience in seeking participants for this academic study addresses a larger problem of studying the attitudes and behaviors of people through online surveys and attempts to recruit participants in social media environments.

The Sample Population

Our methods of sampling, largely in the snowball style of selection of potential respondents, create contact opportunities, but also raise obvious problems – such as those of sample validity and reliability, and some specifically related to studying attitudes and opinions regarding a social movement. Regardless of the topic of such a survey, the respondents make up a self-selected group who choose to opt into the study.

The respondents did not represent the larger Turkish community despite our interest in recruiting those with more wide-ranging attitudes toward the protests. As in other studies using Facebook to post recruitment messages, those who actually completed the survey—either online or offline—tended to be biased towards those who supported the demonstrations (68.4% vs. 31.6% who opposed Gezi)[iii], those who were younger and perhaps more trusting (60% were 30 or younger; 39% were 25 or younger), and those who were more educated (73.9% either held at least an undergraduate degree or were studying to complete one). These demographics, especially as they relate to the supporters of the Gezi movement, were not so different from those of the protestors in Gezi Park in early June, 2013, based on a survey of 4,411 participants in a field survey (Konda, 2014, June 5). In that study 50.8% was female, the mean age was 28, while about half (55.7%) of the protestors held one or more university degrees.

In our survey, characteristics of those who completed the questionnaire offline were mixed. Although somewhat older than the online survey takers, they did not have many unique characteristics (See Table 2).

(TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE)

Because the recruitment of respondents lasted over a period of months, members of one of the groups of people who were most skeptical of the research motives and therefore a group that resisted participation in the study, changed their position and decided to complete the survey after all. The reason was likely based on a growing rift between two Muslim factions that originally worked together to support the then Turkish prime minister's agenda. This conflict eventually resulted in the Erdoğan government's decision to target members of the opposition group, the followers of Fethullah Gülen.[iv] Some of the Gülen supporters completed the survey following the events of December 17, 2013, when tapes were leaked on YouTube revealing alleged corruption activities of members of the prime minister's political party (AKP/Justice and Development) as well as his family ("Erdoğan in alleged," 2014, February 25). Members of Gülen's group were blamed for the illegal wire taps. We cannot say that all of the 292 respondents who completed the survey following the date of the critical split between the groups were loyal to the Gülen group, but several of them told us directly that they were. This circumstance was specific to our study of a particular social movement, but it may also be applied to shifts in loyalties in other movements occurring over time, and researchers need to be sensitive to such changes and their implications for validity.

We were not so successful with other opponents to Gezi—and even with many supporters. The Turkish government not only responded to the demonstrators with water canons and tear gas, but with arrests and beatings. For a time access to YouTube was blocked, and rumors and (actual evidence of) investigations of dissidents through monitoring of email and social media accounts were widespread (Scott, 2014, March 28; Also, see Freedom House, 2015). Perhaps worried that we had ties to Turkish authorities,

potential respondents had little reason to trust us—researchers who spoke Turkish but were not Turks and as such, outsiders. In Table 3 we present the profiles of those respondents who either supported or resisted the Gezi movement.

(TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE)

Had we been able to create a probability sample from all of the Turkish ethnic minorities in the three countries, we might still have had a high refusal rate, given the polarity of positions on the nature of the protests. Turkey itself is polarized along the same lines, and some claim the division has been instigated by those in power (Özkırımlı, 2014, March 19; Akyol, 2015, April 17). About equal numbers support or oppose the president, while 44% is satisfied with the direction of the government and 51% is dissatisfied (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2014). As researchers we were often confronted in anger over the protests themselves, the nature of the questionnaire, and our motives for conducting such research. In those circumstances there would have been no way to convince any opponent of the movement who happened to be included in a statistically drawn sample to complete our questionnaire.

Therefore the sample, however imperfect, represents more of those people who were participants in or supporters of the Gezi protests and fewer of those who were opposed to the protests because they supported the prime minister's position and/or were loyal members of his party. We tried every plan we could think of to let people know about our survey and to convince them of the importance of their participation. As only the three of us were recruiting participants in three countries—both online and in person, the job was difficult.

Questionnaire Construction

The questionnaire consisted of 65 questions, including 6 open-ended questions that were content analyzed. The survey instrument was created in English and translated into Turkish, Dutch and German for maximum respondent ease for completion. Native speakers of the several languages who were members of the research team served as translators, including the authors. For maximum accuracy, back translations were also conducted. Qualtrics was used for the online version of the survey. Questions covered demographics; social and traditional media use (from European and Turkish sources); information about their type (on and offline) and degree of participation in the Gezi movement; sources of information about Gezi; nature of their pre-Gezi activism, and interest and participation in Turkish politics; reasons for participating in the movement; as well as sets of attitudinal questions related to belonging to one country or another and belonging to a group that shared their feelings about Turkey. Wherever possible, 5-point Likert scales were used as measures.

Demographic questions were placed about the middle of the survey, so that if respondents dropped out before the end, we could capture at least half of their answers.

Other researchers have found that the longer the expected length of a questionnaire administered online, the less likely that respondents are to start and/or complete a questionnaire and the higher the non-response rates of questions appearing near the end (Galesic & Bosnjak 2009). We had similar experiences.

Offline and Online Data Collection

To maximize the number of responses data collected offline and in person alongside online surveys were used in our research. Older respondents, those who were

non-Internet users, or those that believed their privacy would not be protected preferred to complete the questionnaire offline. Each format raised separate issues. In the offline collection, sometimes we sat with respondents—both individually and in groups—while they completed the questionnaire. When this occurred in the group environment, respondents sometimes complained about the questionnaire being overly long or that more questions were based on protest participation than on resistance to the movement. Though a pretest of the questionnaire indicated that respondents could complete it in about a half hour, the inclusion of open-ended questions and multi-part questions led to actual completion times of much longer times. Social movement research is particularly sensitive to biases of the respondents as well as those of the questionnaire. We were trying to balance the questionnaire such that a range of attitudes and behaviors related to support or opposition to Gezi were included. To our knowledge, very few events that opposed the Gezi protests (i.e. that support Erdoğan) were scheduled in European cities. Therefore, the questionnaire was somewhat biased in favor of questions addressing the activities of those supporting the movement. Potential respondents were quite vocal about this imbalance in comments made to us personally or within the open-ended questions.

Overall, 2,200 individuals attempted the online version of the questionnaire, but only 1583 proceeded far enough to have answered any questions. Out of this number, we were only able to include 976 of those questionnaires; the remainder of the questionnaires had incomplete or missing demographic information, despite the movement of these questions to the middle of the instrument.

Some respondents took the questionnaires home and returned them to a central location. This procedure led to a lower response rate among potential respondents in the given group, but other options were not available to us when a group gathered for a meeting and could not allot sufficient time to complete the survey at the meeting. Returned questionnaires through this procedure were more often fully completed than through other means, however. Of those respondents who submitted the survey offline, all 107 respondents completed the questionnaire, while only 80% of the online submissions (688 out of 860) did so.

When the online format was used, respondents who quit in the middle would sometimes return to the survey and begin again. We could identify multiple responses through a unique identification number assigned to each respondent based on the IP numbers from the computers used to complete the survey. However, the software used to do that was not entirely reliable given the possibility that the respondent may have used different computers connected to different Internet service providers for duplicate surveys.

Any online survey contains an inherent bias toward those who are younger, more affluent and more educated—particularly in a population whose income and educational levels tend to be lower than the general population. Our survey was no exception. Of the 967 respondents included in the final analysis, 59.9% were age 30 or younger, and 38.6% were age 25 or younger. The Turkish diaspora living in Europe is documented as having a relatively low level of educational attainment when compared to the majority population. However, our survey respondents were highly educated with 20.4% reporting that they were undergraduate students and an additional 53.5% having completed an undergraduate or post-graduate degree.

And there are other problems related to validity of such surveys that have been documented by scholars (see Wiersma, 2013). This social movement did include people who were older, less educated and less affluent, but younger people were certainly more visible in the street protests and in related activities (Polat, Bakiroğlu & Sahin 2013; Varnali & Gorgulu 2014).

Privacy and its Influence on Methodology

The political situation in Turkey leading up to and during the Gezi protests was such that many people were afraid that the government was monitoring personal email, mobile phones, and social media accounts. Evidence that this was occurring was found in news stories (See Daloğlu 2013; Freedom House 2013). Many of the respondents in our survey hold dual citizenship (42 per cent of respondents in Belgium, 36 per cent of those in the Netherlands, and 22 per cent of those in Germany) while others have not yet acquired European citizenship (a total of 82.3 per cent are citizens of Turkey—including those with dual citizenship), so reprisals for expressing criticism of the government through Gezi participation were entirely possible. More than 95 per cent of the respondents also return to Turkey frequently to vacation or visit family. We asked questions about the level of support and feeling of risk due to Gezi park protests in the survey. Out of the total sample, 41.6 per cent agreed with the statement that they felt at risk. Some respondents mentioned this fear in open-ended questions. When asked how much time they had spent in Turkey in the last five years, only 1.3 per cent said they had not been in Turkey, while 46.1 per cent had spent more than 6 months in Turkey during that period.

In the year following Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's election to the presidency, at least 700 people, and possibly as many as 1,000, were prosecuted for insulting him (including

at least one teenager) (Alan & Keskin 2015). So it is not hard to understand that Turkish minorities, even those living far from Turkey, were concerned that information we were gathering might be used against them in some way or that they might be personally identified through the survey instrument despite reassurances to the contrary. These concerns led to refusals in some instances and required extensive convincing in others. As authors, we also had concerns about repercussions, because representatives of the Turkish government approached us via email about the purpose in conducting the study. Fears of reprisals could occur across a range of social movements, so it is particularly important to address the issues of privacy and anonymity.

At the end of the survey we asked respondents to provide their Twitter user names so we could follow their activity related to Gezi in the social medium. Although we disclosed our purpose, this request aroused additional concern over invasion of privacy despite the many users who willingly listed their account information. Part of our larger study was to analyze tweets related to Gezi from Turks in the diaspora living in the three countries of our study. To do that we needed to identify which tweets were being posted from those countries, as geolocating methods are not entirely reliable, and the European-based tweets were mixed with other tweets using the same hashtags. About half the respondents reported having a Twitter account. This percentage is higher than the penetration rate for the population in the several countries of our study, but our respondents are younger than the general population, and Twitter is a very popular social medium among Turks, especially since the start of the Gezi movement. According to Linkedin SlideShare, in July 2014, 72% of Internet users in Turkey had a Twitter account.

Given the low levels of trust in completing this study, we were pleased that 16% of the respondents supplied their Twitter account user names.

Another method we used to recruit respondents and identify individuals to follow on Twitter was to join Facebook pages created by members of the Turkish diaspora. When these pages allowed open registration, we could simply add our own names as members. However, many pages required administrator approval. It is likely that because we do not all have Turkish names we were denied access to some of these pages. Some potential respondents asked us why as non-Turks we were doing this research. Others wrote notes—some polite and others filled with rude comments about Gezi protestors being "retarded" or making personal attacks on us based on the fact that two of us are not European or about our posting inappropriate content to those web pages. In some cases, the survey was deemed to be political, and therefore in violation of the rules of the group. In other cases, the notes commented on the perceived pro-Gezi tone to the questionnaire, and in a few extreme cases referring to it as a "terrorist activity." As a result we were obliged to either leave those groups, or the administrator removed the post that contained our survey link. We protected the privacy of the participants in the study. Anonymity was also assured through the collection methods used by Qualtrics, a company that has certified its adherence to Safe Harbor principles ('Privacy Statement,' n.d.).

Trust

The World Values Survey, which has been measuring global values and their impact on social and political life since 1981 through periodic international surveys has

consistently found that Turks rank among the lowest in the world in their feeling that "most people can be trusted" (see Diez Madrano and World Values Survey, n.d.).

As members of an out-group, we experienced the same lack of trust from potential respondents and believe that mistrust led to lower participation levels in the survey itself. Of course other reasons also contributed to the refusals, but the cultural predisposition to find out-group members untrustworthy was a factor. Because the building of trust is particularly important in social movements (Nip 2004), it is at least as important that researchers of those social movements be trusted by the community members.

Dineson (2013) studied levels of trust in European immigrants. If culture of the country of origin of the immigrants determined their levels of interpersonal trust, the researcher believed the immigrants to Western Europe would continue to trust at similar levels. But if trust varied by the institutional quality of the countries where they currently lived (e.g., there was little corruption in their new home countries), they believed immigrants would tend to trust others at higher levels. Testing his hypotheses on immigrants from 90 countries of origin who currently made their home in 18 Western European countries, Dineson (2013) found evidence that both cultural heritage and institutional context were significant factors in their levels of interpersonal trust. Possibly the low levels of trust of the Turkish ethnic minorities in completing a survey about their activism regarding political events might be explained by their cultural tendency to distrust out-group members regardless of the institutional quality in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany compared to that of Turkey.

Lack of trust for the Turkish minorities in Europe was also based on the divisive political culture in Turkey, particularly critical to the Gezi movement. Even before the

Gezi protests broke out in 2013, hostility toward Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan was on the rise among secular Turks, who perceived him as intruding into their personal lives and denigrating the contributions of Ataturk to the country's very existence (Arango 2012). This caused potential participants to view us with suspicion, especially if they were supporters of the prime minister. We were identified as foreign because of our physical appearance, our names, and information easily available about us online. The "foreigner" problem prevented us from getting information from government-based organizations such as the Diyanet (official religious arm of the Turkish government with a presence in several European countries). Although many scholars who conduct research on any topic may be considered outsiders, this issue is particularly acute in a politically charged environment. We made every attempt to present ourselves as impartial and refused to share personal information that might affect potential respondents' trust in us or our work.

There is also reason to believe that the lack of trust is not specific to the Turkish diaspora. In a study of 50,000 Italians, Sabatini and Sarracino (2014) found that people who use online social networks (i.e. Facebook and Twitter), have lower levels of trust overall.

Terminology Issues and Feedback

One of the advantages of using social media to post links to surveys is the potential for unsolicited responses from anyone who encounters the post. These can be useful for making adjustments in the study**.** Sometimes people responded in anger, even cursing us, for daring to ask questions about Gezi while others offered useful suggestions regarding terminology or question phrasing.

When designing the questionnaire, we were aware of the diversity in the Turkish diaspora. Although the majority of the first migrants had come to Europe as guestworkers who were later joined by their families as far back as the 1960s, there were also political refugees (often Kurdish) and those who came for educational advancement in the group. Some of the respondents had only recently arrived and were born and raised in Turkey, while others were European-born from the second or third generation of arrivals. Most were Sunni Muslim, but many were Alevi[v] or declared no religion. Although the majority of this diaspora were ethnic Turks, Kurds represented a significant percentage. To describe this group with one word, 'Turkish,' did not necessarily cover the diverse backgrouds of our respondents. A debate over whether the term 'Turkish' should be used to describe the people who live in the nation of Turkey has gone on for a number of years (See Baskin 2011, and Grigoriadis 2007). Kurds object to the term as they are not ethnic Turks and see the term Turkish as deliniating ethnicity, not nationality. It has been suggested that the term 'Türkiyeli' be used to describe those who are from the country, i.e. citizens, but not necessarily of Turkish ethnicity and also for those who are of Turkish ethnicity but have never lived in Turkey. We first chose to use the phrase 'of Turkish origin' to include all groups in our study. Two respondents who commented on the use of that phrase insisted that most people living in Europe want to distinguish themselves from those living in Turkey by the use of Türkiyeli to describe their relationship to the country. It would also be a more inclusive term with relation to the potential Kurdish respondents. Following a change in the reference to identity, we received several comments referring to difficulty with the term. "First off, those of us who live outside Turkey are not Türkiyeli. There were Turks before the borders of

Turkey had even been drawn on the maps," wrote one respondent. Another respondent commented that 'there are no Türkiyeli here, only Kurdistanli (meaning Kurds who wish to establish their own country within Turkish borders).' Rather than change the term back to "people of Turkish origin," we politely explained our reasoning to those who sent us critical messages. Linguistic equivalance for whatever term chosen in English, Dutch and German further complicated the choice.

We believe that the negative reactions came from ethnic Turks who were somehow offended by the inclusive term and did not want to be lumped in with those of other ethnicities or believed that the term Turkish meant anyone who came from Turkey and there was no need for a new term to describe them. We note, however, that we refer to our respondents as Turkish ethnic minorities here to simplify the reference. We do not mean to imply that those of Kurdish origin (who may have been born in Turkey or to Kurdish parents in Europe) are ethnically Turkish. Though this problem was specific to our research, it represents the importance of anticiptating the ways in which terminology is determined for use in any survey where respondent identity may affect the outcome. When multiple languages are used in the survey instrument, the issue becomes increasingly complicated.

Methodological Lessons for Future Research

At first glance, many of the issues raised above might be thought to evolve from the emic/etic controversy over who should be conducting the research. None of us are insiders; we were not born in Turkey nor raised in an ethnically Turkish or Kurdish family in a European country. That might limit our complete understanding of the culturally based points we have raised. This is a problem for many researchers working

across cultures. Researching social movements adds to that problem, however. Social movements are goal-oriented and participants often wish to associate with only those who share their point of view; and that problem may be exacerbated in an environment where social network use predominates. A researcher may encounter hostility when raising the opposition's point of view for consideration. Since our research was focused on the protests and the degree and nature of the participation, those who chose not to participate or were opposed to the demonstrations were less willing to answer questions in a survey with such a focus (see Table 2 for the profiles of both pro-Gezi and anti-Gezi respondents).

Thinking over the objections people made to the imbalance in the questionnaire, we might have created more questions related to the reasons for non-participants to oppose the demonstrations—or even a separate equivalent questionnaire that could be selected by the respondent. That would have provided a more complete picture of the several sides taken by members of the diaspora. For us, the focus was on the Gezi protests, and our major goal was to capture the attitudes of those involved in the demonstrations and the impact of their activities on their lives spent in European countries.

One particularly useful strategy for increasing participation in the study was found in the use of informants. These people made contact with us first through email or social media. Sometimes they were known through contact one of us had made in previous research. Other times they were just people we encountered at meetings or social events. Colleagues or friends located across the region were also helpful. Because they were trusted in their communities. If they were activists, they encouraged others in

their groups to take the survey. If they had a wide circle of friends either offline or in social media, they reposted our survey or distributed the questionnaire. The number of responses would have remained quite low if we had not made these contacts and built additional relationships. When we began the study, our biggest concern was the level of survey completion, but as time went on, more people heard about it and were persuaded to complete the study.

In Table 4 we have laid out the several recommendations we offer for anyone conducting similar research. It is hoped that the information we have provided here will be useful to others who are confronted with decisions related to questionnaire format and recruitment of participants in social movements.

(TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE)

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Table 1. Survey studies Studying Ethnic Minorities Engaged in a Social Movement

General Social Movement Research

Focus	Authors/Dates	Major Finding
Social Movements over time	Snow et al., 2013	Social movements cluster in waves or cycles
Use of cross-sectional data	Barrington (2012)	Before and after study of two movements found relationships are stable over time.
Surveying Crowd at Demonstration	Van Laer (2010)	Placing interviewers in front and back of crowd reduces response bias.
Format of Questionnaire		
Comparison of offline to online	Booth-Kewley, Larson and Myoshi (2007)	No differences in use of impression management; higher disclosure of risky behavior online
Use of automated methods and face-to-face methods	Lind, Schober, Conrad, and Richert (2013)	Greater disclosure of socially undesireable behavior when no contact with person's face
Comparison of offline to online	Kays, Gathercoal and Buhrow (2012)	Higher completion rate in online format
Face-to-face vs. mail survey	Rüdig (2010)	Higher mail return from women And those who had sacrificed to travel to the protest; frequent attenders had lower response rate
Recruitment/nature of Respondents		
Recruiting via Facebook vs. traditional methods	Rait, Prochaska, Rubinstein (2015)	Higher success rate on Facebook but also higher rate of ineligibles
Facebook advertising	Gilligan, Kypri and Bourke (2014)	Facebook advertising was cost-Effective and successful
Facebook recruiting	Bhutta (2012)	Very successful, but sample was more female, younger, educated, and religiously active.

Table 2. Profile of Online vs. offline

	Online	*Offline*
Gender		
Male	52.8%	56.1%
Female	47.2%	43.9%
Age (Mean)	30.4 years	36.3 years
Educational Level	University Grad +	University Grad –
Country where they live		
Belgium	31.6%	56.1%
The Netherlands	32.8%	30.8%
Germany	35.6%	13.1%
Length of time spent in Europe (mean)	19.6 years	23.6 years
Born in Turkey	50.7%	57.7%
Europe	49.3%	41.3%
Feel they belong to a faith	63.6%	76.6%
Completion rate	80.0%	100.0%

Table 3. Profile of Pro- and Anti-Gezi Respondents

	Pro-Gezi	*Anti-Gezi*
Gender		
Male	51.3%	56.6%
Female	48.7%	43.4%
Age (Mean)	32.6 years	28.2 years
Educational Level	University Grad +	University Grad –
Country where they live		
Belgium	36.8%	29.2%
The Netherlands	27.5	42.0
Germany	35.7	28.8
Length of time spent in Europe (mean)	18.2 years	23.5 years
Born in Turkey	37.6%	70.6%
Europe	62.2%	37.6%
Feel they belong to a faith	51.4%	94.5%
Have a Twitter account	69.9%	30.4%
Disclosure of the Twitter account	79.9%	20.1%
Disclosure of the Email address	72.1%	27.9%
Start date before December 17th	65.2%	34.8%
after December 17th	72.7%	27.3%
Conservative (strongly agree, agree)	9.3%	55.2%
Religious conservative(strongly agree, agree)	9.2%	59.3%

Table 4.

Recommendations for Using Online Surveys in Social Movements Focused on Ethnic Minorities

Sampling

- Include the opposition/the indifferent to survey the spectrum of opinion
- Random samples may not be possible or even ideal
- Use multiple strategies to reach a far-flung population

Recruitment

- Consider using social media and Facebook or other advertising
- Offline recruitment taps a population you won't find online
- Remain as neutral as possible in presenting your self and your survey to attract a range of respondents

Question Formation/Design

- Work for balance in question phrasing regarding support or opposition of the movement
- Keep questionnaire to a reasonable length; no more than 20 minutes.
- Place demographic questions close to the beginning for those who may not complete the survey
- Consider an introduction to the survey that presents the idea that multiple viewpoints are desired—not just those in favor of the social movement

Use of Multiple Languages

- Understand that more than translation is at stake
- Key terms may not carry similar meaning or represent hot button issues in different languages
- Use of open-ended questions mean that you will need to translate as well as content analyze those answers

Build Trust but be Prepared for Criticism

- Include a researcher/contact person of the same ethnicity as those being surveyed
- Reassure respondents that privacy and anonymity is respected.
- Rely on trusted informants from the beginning
- Provide email contact information; then get ready for emails and respond!
- Criticisms may lead to changes in the questionnaire—even after a pretest
- Respond as politely and professionally as possible, even to rude comments

[i] We included the part of the Kurdish diaspora whose roots are in Turkey. About 18% of Turkey's population is made up of Ethnic Kurds ("The time of the Kurds," Council on Foreign Relations. http://www.cfr.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/time-kurds/p36547?gclid=CI_44uCS_8sCFZeEaQodCEEOsQ#!/?cid=ppc-Google-grant-kurds_infoguide-072715 Many Kurds have migrated to Europe for political reasons.

[ii] In the last several years Turkey has been pulled apart by ethnic, religious, and political differences that have resulted in tensions and much violence across the country. For more information, see Hintz, L. (2015, October 15). "The heinous consequences of Turkey's polarization." *The Washington Post* (https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/10/15/the-heinous-consequences-of-turkeys-polarization/).

[iii] The Pew Research Center's survey (July 2014) of the Turkish public found that about 49% of the population supported the Gezi movement.

[iv] Fethullah Gülen is a controversial Turkish Muslim cleric who is the head of a worldwide Islamic (*Hizmet*) movement, and a major figure in charter schools in the United States and around the world. The organization used to own broadcast and print media in Turkey until those media were taken over by the government and now run by court-appointed administators (Amnesty International, March 4, 2016, "Turkey: Zaman Newspaper Taken Over as Government Steamrolls Free Press:") https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2016/03/turkey-fears-of-zaman-newspaper-takeover/). Some claim it to be the largest Islamic international movement, though it functions without formal organization, structure or membership. The elusive Gülen, who consents to extremely little public access, lives in the Pocono mountains in Pennsylvania. Supporters of were instrumental in the rise of Erdoğan and his party up until the then Prime Minister moved to shut down the private prep schools operated by Hizmet across Turkey in late 2013 (Zalewski, P., December 4, 2013. "Turkey's Erdoğan battles country's most powerful religious movement" *Time* *(http://world.time.com/2013/12/04/turkeys-erdogan-battles-with-countrys-most-powerful-religious-movement/*).

[v] Most Alevis in Turkey are also Kurds, though the numbers of them who are Kurdish or Turkish are unknown. Estimates range from 15-20 million within Turkey forming the second largest religious community in the country. As Paul and Seyrek of the European Policy Centre say, 'as with Shia Muslims, Alevis consider the Prophet Mohammed's descendants (12 Imams) as holy, they also see them as philosophic leaders. Philosophy, human development and humanist ideals are important cornerstones of the Alevi belief. Those of Alevi faith, which means "follower of Ali", attribute great significance to Sufism and the 12 Imams, with a unique importance given to Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed. Staunchly secular, Alevis openly practice different gender policies compared to other denominations.